



THE AVON PARK BOMBING RANGE
AVON PARK, FLORIDA

Saturday morning
Feb. 13, 1943

Hello Folks,

Guess you can tell by the frequency of my letters whether or not I'm busy, can't you? - Well, we have been. In addition to the new routine of my new squadron - we've had several meetings at night for all the officers of the post. - Not that the meetings are so long. - They just take a big hunk of the evening away, - and then add time to that for a bull session between Joe, Paul, and I - well, - there isn't much time left! - Honestly - when a bunch of pilots meet - ~~it~~ one would think they had just had their first kids - cause we all always go into detail on any flight we've had since the last time we met, - and sorta hash out any other stories or articles we've read! - We must surely be nuts or else you'd think that anyone who sleeps, eats, drinks, and thinks flying all the 24 hours could find something else to talk about? Maybe it just boils down to that's all we know to talk about, I don't know.

My new squadron is a pleasure to be in, in lots of ways. - They seem to have a little bit of organization that the 478th needed plenty of and things are run lot differently. - We have ground school

and P.T. part the day - and flying the rest of it. This week we've flown daytime and had nights off. - Next week - we only have ground school & stuff in the day and fly at night. - Guess it all evens up in the long run. -

Then, too, - our actual work is more interesting. - We take long flights about the state of Florida - and get to drop ^{real} bombs on ground targets - or I should say "at" ground targets - cause so far - not many go "on"! Later on we get some machine gun practice out over the Gulf. - It's all new and different, but interesting. -

Glad you got your candy and liked it, Ma. - Thought maybe it might come in handy to nibble on from time to time. Let me know when it runs low.

Have you received the oranges yet. - You should have - cause I ordered them 2 weeks ago today. - I thought you would have gotten them long before this. Maybe I oughta check upon them. - will do.

Wouldn't you know our squadron would change its policies after I got in it! - I was supposed to get tomorrow off - my very first day since Jan. 1st. - but no - they work like the others. - under a new system - no days off! - Oh, well. - doesn't make much difference - on Sundays all we have to do is fly - but it prevents our going anywhere away from Avon Park. - It wouldn't but with no auto, no gas, - and reduced bus service - it's almost impossible to get away for the few hours we are off.

Think I'm going to a dance tonight - that is if I don't fly. - The 47th officers were invited to Winter Haven by some outfit for the dance and I was signed up from



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the time I was in the sqdn. - all of us - Joe, Paul, + I, signed up. - just for the change of scenery if nothing else. - The transportation to + from will be furnished by the Post here - or to put it in the vernacular - will be G.I. - which means "trucks", of course. - If we don't like the dance - there's always the town of Winter Haven to roam around!

Oh, yes. - I went sail boating the other day! - Right out on the lake outside my barrack door. - The Bombardier of our crew has a sail boat - so the other day when a ship we were scheduled to fly had to be worked on - we hustled right back and went out on the lake. - The odd part was - when the ship came into service - they couldn't find us - I wonder why? - It couldn't be that we were becalmed about 2 miles from shore with not even a paddle, could it? Oh, well. - it was still lots of fun and we're just looking for the chance to do it again!

Gotta get ready for P.T. now - so I'd better bring myself to a whoa for awhile, at least!

Monday A.M. -

Hell, well. - lots ~~has~~ happened since I started this. - I flew Saturday afternoon - got down, hustled my supper - shaved, dressed and went off to Winter Haven! - Five ~~men~~ of us went together in one of the fellow's car - if it might be called that. We even had to push it to get it started!

The dance was awfully nice - and the whole week-end in general was quite the nicest I've had in a long, long time. - The fellows and girls were about even in number so you could take more than 2 steps without someone cutting in. - It was given by the Junior Civic League or something like that, - and most of the girls we met were school teachers - and between 20 + 25! - Imagine that! After the dance - instead of coming back, - we went to a hotel - the best in town of course! After a leisurely morning - including of all things, church, we had dinner at the hotel and were just starting out to go sight seeing in the "cypress gardens" at the special request of the owner - when someone asked us if we wanted dates - said he had some for 3 of us - so the whole 5 of us went! - When we got there - more girls had come - and to top it off - they were the ones with whom we had spent most of our time at the dance - so it was more like someone we already knew. Anyhow - we didn't get to see the "Gardens" after all - we stayed at the house there all afternoon - talking, dancing, and riding the bicycles they had there! We left there about 8 at night and got back to camp about 10:30. - It makes it nice - cause besides having a good time - we know people now - and have a place to go to if & when we get time off.

I started to look up Henry's relatives while there but found out they live in a small town outside of Winter Haven - so with no transportation and all this other happening - I said, "maybe next time."

Excuse this hurried scribbling - I've just got a few moments - and I wanted to get this off to you. - I'll write a continuation later. - Gotta go fly now -
Bye + Love,
Frank